



# Maricopa County

## News Release

### Environmental Services Department

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### ***Food Safety: the best reward***

### **Maricopa County Environmental Services announces a public survey for choosing new Food Inspection Award or Grading System**

The Maricopa County Environmental Services department is inviting the general public to partake in a special treat: the Food Awards/Grading System Voting site.

County residents can now review online and vote for one of the two methods under consideration to acknowledge and/or grade local restaurants and other facilities upon their routine food inspection.

“To ensure food safety has always been the main goal of our food inspections and efforts”, says John Kolman, director with the Maricopa County Environmental Services department. “The public and food establishments in general share this same concern and value the importance of grading what operators do in these regards and the acknowledgment of those that do a good job”.

This summer the department implemented a new internal database and made changes to the inspection reports as a result of adopting the 2009 FDA Food Code, which is the most current and best science available to ensure food safety. At the same time, the department also found this to be a good opportunity to review and enhance its Food Award System. Along with the industry’s input, Environmental Services is asking the public to join in selecting the best ‘recipe’ in rewarding food safety efforts.

A survey with two different models has been posed on the website for the public to consider and make a selection: an Award System recognizing “Excellent, Good and Fair”, and a Grading System that entails giving an “A, B or C”.

The department’s awards and grading system will continue to be a voluntary program. Operators can opt in or opt out of the Award/Grading System for each inspection prior to the inspection being conducted. If an establishment doesn’t participate in the Award System, the term “Opt Out/Award” will appear in the “Award” column but the inspection will still occur.

-More-

*Food Inspections Awards/Grading System Voting*  
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It is important to note that any time the Department finds an establishment not capable of providing safe food service their permit is immediately suspended until such time that they can once again demonstrate safe food service.

For more details and to vote for the type of award that you feel best represents how a restaurant and food establishment should be rated, please visit: [www.maricopa.gov/envsvc](http://www.maricopa.gov/envsvc). To contact Maricopa County Environmental Services you may also call (602) 506-6616.